



THE BOARD REPORT



2001-02: Issue 6

June 2002

The following is a summary of the June 12, 2002, meeting of the State Board of Education.

Adoption of Fiscal Years 2003-2008 Consolidated State Application for Funds Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

The Board approved Connecticut's application for federal funds under the ESEA, as reauthorized by the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001. The application consolidates 14 separate federal programs into a comprehensive plan that supports the five federal goals and performance indicators, as well as the Board's goals in its *Comprehensive Plan for Education, 2001-05*. The five goals address levels of academic proficiency that all students would meet, the special needs of certain populations of students, and factors such as qualified teachers and school safety.

The application describes comprehensive, coordinated planning and service delivery, and provides the framework for standards, assessments and accountability. It also addresses the Department's responsibility for ensuring the programmatic and fiscal integrity of the ESEA programs. Additional components of the plan related to performance targets, adequate yearly progress and the implementation of assessments are due in January 2003, May 2003, September 2003, May 2006 and December 2008.

Connecticut would receive \$174,959,459 in ESEA funds. While this amount represents an increase in the federal allocation to Connecticut for programs funded under the grant (including funding for early literacy programs, after-school programs, technology infrastructure and professional development, development of an assessment program in Grades 3-8, English language proficiency programs, class size reduction, etc.), there are significant new requirements at both the state and local levels. In his circular letter to superintendents, Commissioner of Education Theodore S. Sergi noted, "The heart of the new legislation is testing in Grades 3-8, beginning in 2005-06. In addition, science will be assessed in Grades 5, 8 and 10 beginning in 2007-2008. The accountability system and its measurement of adequate yearly progress have some very challenging assumptions and there is a great deal of debate in Washington, D.C. and across the country about implementation."

For further information, please contact Associate Commissioner Leslie M. Averna at 860.713.6550.

Revision of Standards: Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)

Provisions of the federal legislation adopted earlier this year, *No Child Left Behind Act*, require each state to adopt a proficiency level standard by which the progress of its students will be measured, as well as an advanced level and basic level of performance. Based primarily on academic assessments, the state must establish annual objectives to define what constitutes adequate yearly progress of the school, district and state in the areas of reading and mathematics. The goal is for all students to reach the proficient level by school year 2013-2014.

The law requires state and local educational agency report cards that present detailed information on student performance relative to these achievement levels and other indicators of the accountability model to be distributed in the fall of 2002. In recommending standards to comply with the federal legislation, Department staff members reviewed the current standards on the CMT and CAPT. In all content areas (mathematics, reading and writing on the CMT, and mathematics, science, Reading Across the Disciplines and Writing Across the Disciplines on the CAPT), the current standards define four performance levels, known as Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4. Level 1 is regarded as "intervention," whereas Level 4 connotes being at or above the goal level. The Board adopted Level 3 or above as the equivalent of the "proficient level," taking into consideration the rigor of achieving that standard and the reasonability of all students attaining that level by the school year 2013-2014.

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The “advanced level” was determined to be that level of performance that was achieved in 2001 by approximately 20 percent of Connecticut’s students statewide in each subject area at each grade level. While this figure is somewhat arbitrary, it will provide Connecticut with a starting point from which it can measure its progress in moving more students up to this level.

Level 2 was deemed the equivalent of the “basic proficiency level,” and Level 1 as “below basic.”

Commissioner Sergi noted that Connecticut’s goal levels are well established and understood as important indicators of educational achievement. “The state goal should continue to be the focus of Connecticut’s test results and continue to be reported in addition to the levels required by the federal reporting requirements,” he noted.

The report concluded by stating that “In the next few years, Connecticut’s testing and accountability systems will change in many ways as a result of *No Child Left Behind*, H.R. 1. The ultimate goal ... is for all of Connecticut’s public school students to reach at least the proficient level on the CMT and CAPT by 2013-2014.”

Commissioner Sergi provided a quarterly report on the progress of the Hartford Public School System. The report details the progress made in the school system, as well as ongoing needs. Commissioner Sergi noted that “some of the core elements related to financial systems, facilities planning, reading instruction, curriculum and staff development, access to technology, purchasing procedures and collective bargaining agreements have improved dramatically, and there has been a visible gain in student progress on the Connecticut Mastery Test. However, student achievement and outcomes will need to be improved further, and sustained over time in all grade levels, in order to establish a trend of comprehensive progress.” Acknowledging improvements in student achievement and a closing of the gap between Hartford and state averages, Commissioner Sergi cautioned, “this progress must still be

seen in the context of the overall low level of Hartford student achievement.”

The current priority needs and concerns of the Hartford Public Schools include (1) insufficient funding for the 2002-2003 budget year; (2) greater focus on middle and high school student outcomes, equal to that already established for elementary school students; (3) greater attention to special needs students; and (4) more rapid progress in the area of school facilities.

Commissioner Sergi commended the spirit of optimism and the progress realized over the past five years and encouraged all involved in continuing efforts to improve the quality of education in the Hartford Public Schools.

The Board reviewed *Profiles of Our Schools: Condition of Education in Connecticut 2000-2001*. This report provides data about public education in Connecticut that is used by local officials, educators and parents to review progress and make informed decisions. This year’s report includes a special section on physical education. Each year the *Condition of Education* focuses on a different curriculum area; next year, it will include a section on world languages. Major highlights of the report include:

- ☐ public school enrollment will continue to increase through 2005-2006;
- ☐ average class size has remained relatively stable since 1991-92;
- ☐ the average hours of instruction per year have steadily increased since 1991-92;
- ☐ the cumulative dropout rate (preliminary figure for 2000-2001) has declined by 3.9 percentage points since 1998;
- ☐ the full-time equivalent count of certified staff members increased 3.2 percent, to 48,327.2, in just the last year;
- ☐ the special education prevalence rate has declined for the sixth straight year;
- ☐ the number of students per computer has decreased significantly since 1993-94;
- ☐ the average years of teaching experience and the percentage of staff members with master’s degrees or higher have been decreasing since 1993-94; and
- ☐ the percentage of high school graduates completing three or more years of a single world language has increased from 47 percent in 1993 to 56 percent in 2001.

For further information or to request a copy of the Condition of Education Report, please call Thomas Murphy at 860-713-6525.

The Board granted continued approval to two of the state’s regional educational service centers: Education Connection in Litchfield and LEARN in Old Lyme. Both centers were approved for a five-year period ending June 30, 2007. The centers provide several services to local school districts, based on the needs of their region.

The Board reviewed the section of the 2001-02 *Condition of Education* report titled “The State of Physical Education”. This report addresses the extent to which students are provided opportunities and are receiving physical education, as well as assessment data. It states that physical fitness should be a result of the balance of activities that are provided in the physical education programs at school and continued by the family and community.

The Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment is a health-related assessment that focuses on promoting optimum health and preventing the onset of diseases and problems associated with inactivity. In 1998 the assessment was revised to align with national tests and trends. The test measures four fitness components: cardiorespiratory, flexibility, upper body strength and endurance, and abdominal strength and endurance. In 1998, 37.6 percent of Connecticut students passed all four assessments. In 1999, 38.9 percent did so, and in 2000, 34.2 percent passed all four assessments. The decline in 2000 might be attributable to higher standards for consistent test administration.

The Department offers technical assistance and professional development to districts to develop standards-based curriculum with the overall goal of choosing to participate regularly in physical activities designed to maintain and enhance healthy lifestyles, both now and in the future. Plans are underway to expand the Coordinated School Health Program model, which emphasizes the need to coordinate curricular offerings with services provided (e.g., physical education, health education, nutrition services, school health services, and family/community involvement).

Representatives of three school districts were invited to address the Board on their school systems’ successes in physical education programs.

Bristol

John Novakowski, Supervisor of Health, Physical Education and Athletics, explained that the goal of Bristol’s physical education program is to provide students with a developmentally appropriate physical education experience, centered on developing the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors to become and stay physically active throughout their lifetimes. The physical education program was redesigned after a study of the program revealed that the needs of only 30 percent of the students – the athletes – were being met, and the majority of students were not engaged in the program. The school system makes use of community resources (swimming pool, bowling alley, track, golf course, local hospital) as part of its program.

Bristol incorporates the skills and concepts of the Physical Best Program, developed by the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. This program addresses some of the components of the Coordinated School Health model through collaboration with health education, nutrition services and partnering with families and communities.

Easton/Redding/Regional School District No. 9

Pamela Goodpaster, Administrator for Health, Physical Education and Athletics, summarized the districts’ wellness approach to physical fitness, acknowledging the importance of both physical education and health (emotional, physical and spiritual) to one’s overall well-being. The district has moved away from a sport to a fitness approach, and focuses on lifetime fitness activities. Adventure programming is a strong component throughout the elementary and middle school program. High school students collect samples of their performance in a wellness growth portfolio, combining both health and physical education activities. This allows them to assess their present abilities, behaviors and knowledge and what modifications are needed in the future to improve their overall well-being. Students are required to earn 2.5 credits in health/physical education in order to graduate.

West Hartford

Rosemarie Bonner, Supervisor of Health and Physical Education, explained that West Hartford’s elementary school program focuses on general body management, where students experiment with the elements of movement through dance, gymnastics, games, and introductory-level sports. In middle school, students begin to participate more in specific team and individual sports, and continue in dance. In addition, adventure and outdoor education and games provide for interaction among peers at the middle school level. Professional development is an important component of successful programs, Ms. Bonner noted.

The district is currently expanding its definition of fitness to include a component on nutrition. Specific units on fitness are required, in which students design and implement a physical fitness unit to achieve a level of personal fitness. The goal of the program is to choose activities that they can engage in as lifetime pursuits to maintain and improve their physical fitness level.

State Advisory Council for Special Education

The Board received the annual report from the State Advisory Council for Special Education. The council serves in an advisory capacity for the purpose of providing policy guidance regarding special education and related services for children with disabilities. Dr. James Granfield, Chairperson of the State Advisory Council, and Dr. Richard Thomas, member of the Council, apprised the Board of the activities of the SAC for the past year, key issues on the Council's agenda for the coming year, and recommendation for the Board's consideration.

The Council has been actively monitoring the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and monitoring the activities of the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education. The Council also has worked to align Connecticut legislation with improved outcomes for children and youth with disabilities. In particular, it recommended that the Education Committee consider legislation to convene a literacy panel to review successful reading approaches for students in Grades 4 and beyond; reducing the state formula for excess costs to three times the average per pupil costs of education to towns; and supporting educational programs for gifted and talented students by assisting towns to meet the needs of these students. The Council, in cooperation with others, worked to develop standards for paraprofessionals working with children with disabilities. They expressed concerns about the gaps in the coordination of services and supports for students in Connecticut's juvenile justice system.

The Board took the opportunity to recognize Bonnie J. Moran for her 14 years of service to the Council. Ms. Moran served as Chairperson from 1995-2001, and was commended for her outstanding leadership and commitment on behalf of students with disabilities and their families.

Additional Seats Authorized for Charter Schools

The Board authorized a net increase of 129 additional seats for charter schools in the 2002-03 school year, pending final state budget authorization. This authorization provides a total of 2,224 seats. This figure accounts for 109 additional seats allocated to the existing charter schools plus 140 seats allocated to a new charter school, New Beginnings, Inc., minus 120 seats resulting from the closing of Charter Oak Preparatory Academy on February 1, 2002.

Fairfield University Teacher Preparation Program

The Board granted full program approval for the period October 1, 2002, through September 30, 2007, to the following Fairfield University graduate and undergraduate programs: elementary education, English, French, German, Latin, Spanish, history and social studies, mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics, general science, earth science, bilingual education, teaching English to speakers of other languages, comprehensive special education, school library media, school counselor, and school psychologist. All applicable standards were rated "fully met" or "met with distinction."

Alternate Route to Certification Programs

The Board took the following actions:

- ☐ granted provisional program approval to the ARC II Program, administered by the Department of Higher Education, for the period July 1, 2002, through October 1, 2004;
- ☐ approved the operation of satellite campuses for ARC I in New Haven and Bridgeport for the period June 12, 2002, through October 1, 2004;
- ☐ approved the addition of ARC I and ARC II certification programs in family and consumer science (prekindergarten through Grade 12) and technology education (prekindergarten through Grade 12), for the period September 30, 2002, through October 1, 2004; and
- ☐ extended provisional program approval of the ARC I Program from October 1, 2003, to October 1, 2004.

ARC I is an intensive eight-week summer program, with four weeks of student teaching in a summer school, for mid-career professionals. ARC II is conducted over 22 weeks in evening or weekend classes from October to May, with four weeks of student teaching in March. Successful graduates receive a temporary 90-day permit, which provides a trial period as a teacher in a public school. If the trial period is successful, graduates are then granted initial certification. As for all new teachers, the district provides BEST training and support. For further information about the ARC programs, please contact the Alternate Route Program Office, Department of Higher Education, 860. 947.1300, or browse the ARC website: www.arc@ctdhe.org.

**Plans of Representation for Regional Boards of Education:
Regional School District No. 13
Regional School District No. 15**

The Board granted the request submitted by Regional School District No. 13 to extend by 14 days the 90-day time limit provided in state statute in order to allow the school district to hold a referendum on its plan of representation. Scheduling conflicts in the towns of Durham and Middlefield necessitated the request for an extension.

The Board approved the plan of representation submitted by the Regional School District Reapportionment Committee of Regional School District No. 15, which adjusts the representation on the local board as follows: The number of members from Middlebury will remain at four (with weighted vote at 1.0), while the Southbury representation will increase from six to eight members (with weighted vote at 1.5).

**Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) Program Requirements
for the 2002-2003 School Year**

State law requires beginning teachers to participate in a beginning teacher support and assessment program. Since 1989, the Board has defined eligibility and participation requirements in the BEST Program on the basis of the type of teaching certificate and endorsement category, as well as the beginning teacher's teaching assignment.

The Board approved changes that impact (1) the categories of participation for beginning teachers first registered in the program during the 2002-2003 school year, along with corresponding certificates and endorsement areas; (2) program requirements for beginning teachers in the "portfolio induction" and "support only" categories of BEST and corresponding standards for completion of the portfolio assessment; and (3) holders of the Durational Shortage Area Permit and Nonrenewable Interim Charter School Certificate, who will move to the "support only" category until they qualify for the initial educator or 90-day certificate; and (4) the schedule for submission of portfolios for third-year teachers to February 1, with results available to the candidate and district by April 1. In addition, a third opportunity will be provided to submit a portfolio by June 1 only upon request of the superintendent. These results would be available August 15.

For further information about the changes approved by the Board or the BEST Program in general, please call Catherine Fisk Natale, Director of the BEST Program, at 860.713.6831.

**State Board of Education
Student Members**

The Board commended **Jennifer Chudy of Tolland** and **Andrew Gladstein of Trumbull**, the Board's 2001-02 student members, for their contributions to public education and wished them continued success in college. The June 12 meeting was the last regular meeting during their one-year terms on the Board.

Governor Rowland is expected to announce Jennifer's and Andrew's successors in the near future. The State Student Advisory Council on Education screened approximately 85 applications, interviewed 11 students, and recommended five students to the Governor for his consideration. The 2002-03 school year marks the fifth year Connecticut has had student representatives on its State Board of Education.

Recognition

Congratulations to the following individuals who were recognized by the State Board of Education for their outstanding accomplishments:

2001 General Education Development (GED) Scholar: **Sara I. Waterfall of Danbury**, Connecticut's highest scorer on the GED test in 2001;

2001 Title I Distinguished Graduates: **Inez Margarita Ramirez and Omar Roldan**. The National Association of State Title I Directors and the U.S. Department of Education recognize as Title I Distinguished graduates individuals who have participated in the Title I program at some time during their elementary or secondary school life and who attest that such services helped them become productive citizens. Ms. Ramirez, a recipient of Title I services while attending Waterbury public schools, is now a bilingual/ESL teacher in Waterbury, and recently earned an administrative degree from Sacred Heart University. Mr. Roldan received services under the Migrant Program in the Hartford Public Schools. He is now the lead mechanic and director of communications at the Cambridge, Massachusetts, Sheraton Hotel.

2001-2002 Magnet Schools of America (MSA), Inc, School of Distinction Award: **The Metropolitan Learning Center, Bloomfield**, and the **Regional Multicultural Magnet School, New London**, received the MSA 2001-02 Magnet School of Distinction Award. The Metropolitan Learning Center is an international global studies magnet school with an intensive world language and technology component, serving students in Grades 6-9. The Regional Multicultural Magnet School is the oldest interdistrict magnet school in Connecticut. It serves students in Grades K-5 and offers all-day kindergarten, Spanish language instruction for all students, a multicultural environment and curriculum, and multiage classrooms.

Beginning Educator Support and Assessment (BEST) Program Teachers-in-Residence

- **Elizabeth A. Buttner, a science teacher in Regional School District #10**
- **Marilynn Guerrero, a visual arts teacher in the Litchfield Public Schools**
- **Nancy S. Hernandez, a world languages teacher in the Simsbury Public Schools**
- **Edward J. Manfredi, a physical education teacher in the Bristol Public Schools**
- **Albert C. Washicko, an elementary education teacher in the Newtown Public Schools**

The BEST teachers-in residence played critical roles in developing and implementing a discipline-specific support and assessment program for beginning educators participating in the BEST Program. These teachers were released from their districts for a period of one to four years to serve as "teachers in residence."

Career and Technical Student Organizations – Outstanding Community Service Awards

- **Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA), Hamden High School**
- **Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), John F. Kennedy High School, Waterbury**
- **Future Farmers of America (FFA), Ledyard High School**
- **Skills/Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (Skills USA-VICA), H.C. Wilcox Regional Vocational-Technical High School, Meriden**
- **Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), Lyman Hall High School, Wallingford**
- **Technology Student Association (TSA), Windham High School, Willimantic**

All local chapters of career and technical student organizations plan and implement community service projects as part of the quality chapter initiative. The organizations recognized by the State Board of Education represent the outstanding chapter in each organization.

Challenge to Educational Citizenship Award Program – Outstanding Projects. The two top-scoring projects selected for the 2001-02 Citizenship Award were the Kids Involved in Doing Service (KIDS) Program at Rogers Park Middle School and Broadview Middle School in Danbury and the Bikes for Kids project at Vinal Regional Vocational-Technical School in Middletown. The Board commended the participants of these programs for their strong character, leadership and civic consciousness.

National Association for Gifted Children's Nicholas Green Distinguished Student Award Recipient: **Evan Feinberg, a fifth grade student at North Stratfield School in Fairfield**. This award is presented to one student in Grades 3-6 in each state for excellence in academics, the arts or leadership. Evan was selected for this award for his extraordinary ability in the areas of science, astronomy and mathematics.

Prudential Spirit of Community Award: **Ashleigh Crowe, a student at Suffield Academy in Suffield, and Lauren Meehan, a Grade 6 student at New Fairfield Middle School**. Ashleigh was one of 10 recipients nationwide of the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, selected for her efforts in organizing a network of volunteers to improve living and educational conditions in the Dominican Republic. Lauren was chosen as state honoree in the competition, selected for her efforts to assist senior citizens in caring for and feeding their pets.

The Board adopted the *School Leader Evaluation and Professional Development Guidelines*. These guidelines will assist districts in developing a School Leader Evaluation and Professional Development Plan, in fulfillment of Section 10-151b(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes. The guidelines are closely aligned with existing Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development Guidelines, adopted by the Board in 1999. However, the school leader guidelines address the professional accountability of school leaders and their unique professional development needs. The guidelines have been disseminated to all school districts, regional educational service centers, local professional organizations, and teacher and administrator higher education preparation programs.

**Brookfield Board of Education Plan to Average at Least 180 Days
in School Years 2001-02 and 2002-03**

Brookfield closed its schools as a result of the discovery of unacceptable levels of asbestos in the Huckleberry Hill Elementary School, Center Elementary School, Whisconier Middle School and Brookfield High School. High school students were able to satisfy the 180-day requirement by attending school at Danbury High School. The State Board of Education accepted the local board's plan that will allow all students currently enrolled in Brookfield in Grades K-8 to receive an average of 180 days of instruction in the 2001-02 and 2002-03 school years. The 2002-03 Brookfield school calendar will incorporate all days short of the 180 required days in 2001-02 for all grades affected.

The Board approved the fiscal years 2003-2007 State Plan for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth Program for submission to the United States Department of Education for funding. Last year, at least 4,875 children and youth in Connecticut experienced homelessness. Funds will be used to ensure that all children and youth experiencing homelessness have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including preschool, provided to other children and youth. Connecticut's appropriated grant for fiscal year 2003 is \$512,007.

The Board approved a grant application to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for the Refugee Children School Impact Program. Connecticut applied for \$399,997 for the 2002-03 school year. Funds will provide for some of the costs of educating refugee children incurred by a local school district in which significant numbers of refugee children reside. The New Haven Public Schools will receive the funds and will provide an in-kind contribution of \$35,318. In turn, the school system will subcontract a portion of the funds to local agencies to assist in its efforts to provide educational services to refugee students.

The Board adopted the Audit Plan for the 2002-03 fiscal year. The majority of time will be spent in the priority areas of school construction and other grants, particularly the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant. The Office of Internal Audit will also review federal/state single audit issues and six of the state's regional vocational-technical schools.

**Language Assessment Scale (LAS) Selected to Assess Acquisition of English
for all Limited-English-Proficient Children**

The Board, pursuant to Section 10-17f of the Connecticut General Statutes and the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind* legislation, approved the LAS as the instrument to annually assess the acquisition of English of all limited-English-proficient students and the following proficiency standards:

- ☐ Kindergarten, a score of 5 on a scale of 1-5 on the Pre-LAS, Oral;
- ☐ Grades 1-12, a score of 5 on a scale of 1-5 on the LAS, Oral; and
- ☐ Grades 2-12, a score of 3 on a scale of 1-3 on the LAS, Reading and Writing.

While these scores represent the maximum score on the tests, they only represent an English proficiency level sufficient to exit LEP services. The *No Child Left Behind Act* requires, in part, an annual linguistic assessment for all LEP students in Grades K-12. The law also requires the Department to collect and monitor the results of the linguistic assessments for each school and to report the results to the U.S. Department of Education biennially.

The Board approved the following changes in test requirements for Connecticut certification in a world language: (1) discontinue Praxis II tests in German, French and Italian; and (2) adopt the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Oral Proficiency Interview and Writing Proficiency Test in the languages available, for an endorsement in a world language, with a passing standard of "intermediate high," effective July 1, 2002.

Schedule of Meetings 2002-03

The Board approved its meeting schedule for 2003. Below are the scheduled meetings of the Board from September 2002 through December 2003.

September 11, 2002	February 5, 2003	August 6, 2003
October 9, 2002	March 5, 2003	September 10, 2003
November 6, 2002	April 2, 2003	October 1, 2003
December 4, 2002	May 7, 2003	November 5, 2003
January 8, 2003	June 4, 2003	December 3, 2003

Meetings are usually held in the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford. Visitors are advised to call the Office of the State Board of Education at 860-713-6510 to confirm the date, place and time of meetings.

Use Of Discretionary Funds by Regional Educational Service Centers

Pursuant to Section 10-66j of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Board directed that 6.25 percent of funds appropriated to each of the regional educational service centers be used in 2002-03 to provide regional interdistrict activities reducing racial, ethnic and economic isolation, including support for interdistrict magnet schools operated by the RESCs; support for students participating in OPEN CHOICE; professional development for teachers in educating students from diverse backgrounds; data collection and analysis of districts' efforts to reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation; and minority recruitment activities.

Other Business

The Board also did the following at its meeting on June 12, 2002:

- ❑ Discussed a **revised Position Statement on Preschool Services and Programs**. The position statement, originally adopted in 1997, was modified to reflect the provisions and emphases in the Board's Comprehensive Plan for Education, as well as the importance of local school board leadership in each community to ensure that the educational needs of preschool children are being met. The statement also outlines the local school boards' responsibilities to strengthen the connections with private and public partners to meet the needs of preschool children. The revised statement will be presented to the Board for adoption in September 2002, and will be disseminated statewide.
- ❑ Discussed a draft **Position Statement on Educational Leadership**. The statement was developed by the Board's Policy Development Committee, based on the belief that the foundation for high academic achievement and more productive schools and students is strong collaborative leadership among the school district team: the local school board, the superintendent, principals, teachers, students, parents and community-based partners. Upon adoption of the statement by the Board in September 2002, it will be disseminated statewide. It is intended to elicit discussions at the local and school-building levels about effective leadership that can promote the changes required to adequately prepare students for the world today and in the future.
- ❑ Reviewed a summary report on the Department's **2001 Affirmative Action Plan**. The report summarizes the Department's success in providing opportunities to increase employment of qualified persons from protected ethnic and racial groups, women and persons with disabilities. The full report was submitted to the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities for review and analysis.
- ❑ Adopted the **Statement of Commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity**. In the statement, the Board maintains its commitment to the concept and practice of equal employment opportunity for all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or disabling condition.

Regional Vocational-Technical School System (RVTSS) Matters

The Board considered the following topics concerning the RVTSS:

Transfer and articulation agreements between the Regional Vocational-Technical Schools and the Community College System

Such agreements strengthen the linkages between the two systems, and benefit both students and employers. They are developed to continue to effect seamless transitions from high school to a community college and beyond. Two agreements are pending between the Community College System and the Vocational-Technical School System: the College of Technology and Licensed Practical Nurse Programs.

Basic Skills for Graduation, Including Credit Requirements and Performance Standards

The Board approved the RVTSS' basic skills for graduation, in compliance with Public Act 01-166. This act requires each local and regional board of education to specify the basic skills necessary for graduation for classes graduating in 2006 and thereafter, and to include a process to assess a student's level of competency in such skills. The RVTSS policy, in part, requires that RVTSS students earn a minimum of 27.75 credits in accordance with credit distribution requirements and credit value as set forth in the system's "Promotion, Retention and Graduation Requirements" document (June 21, 1993). In addition, it requires all students in the graduating class of 2006 and thereafter to satisfactorily demonstrate district performance standards in language arts, mathematics and school-to-career.

School Construction Projects

The Board approved construction projects and cost estimates for Eli Whitney RVTS and Norwich RVTS, and contingent on whether these two projects are included in the action of the General Assembly before June 30, 2002, approved for submission in their place construction projects at H.H. Ellis RVTS and J.M. Wright RVTS.

Administrator Leadership and Performance Process

The Board approved the Administrator Leadership and Performance Process to replace the existing administrative evaluation plan currently used in the RVTSS. The Board also authorized the school system to pilot the plan during the 2002-03 school year, to allow for in-service training and refinement. The proposed school visitation evaluation process will be used as an evaluation tool beginning in the 2002-03 school year.

Policy on the Use of Electronic Information Resources in the Vocational-Technical Schools

The Board approved this policy to govern acceptable use of electronic information resources by students and employees. The policy takes into account advances in the use of and control over electronic information resources and state and federal guidelines governing the use of such resources. It will be included in the VTSS student handbook, which is distributed to students and parents each year, beginning in September 2002.

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

(effective July 1, 2002)

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE	STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS
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NOTE: The September meeting of the State Board of Education will be held on September 11, 2002. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. in Room 307 of the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT.

The Board Report is published monthly and is posted on the Department's Internet site (<http://www.state.ct.us/sde>). It provides a summary of matters considered by the State Board of Education at its regular monthly meetings. The Department welcomes comments and suggestions concerning the format and content of ***The Board Report***. Please submit your comments to Pamela V. Bergin, Office of the State Board of Education, 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 301, Hartford, CT 06106, or pamela.bergin@po.state.ct.us.

